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PRIMITIVE COLORS.

THE story is told of an English painter who was a delicate and skilful colorist (sometimes it is said to have been Etty and sometimes Turner), who, when asked what pigments he used to produce such beautiful effects, replied, "a little yellow, and a little blue, and a little red." And when further asked what he mixed them with, he replied, "I mix them with brains." It is a very good story and as far as it goes the replies are perfect. The skilful painter will produce marvels with the simple primitive colors in any form, and any kind of oil, varnish or megilp which comes to hand can be made to serve his purpose. His "brains" will supply many deficiencies. If he had a perfect yellow, a perfect red and a perfect blue, tints which would exactly correspond with the tints in the rainbow, and if these pigments were all alike transparent or opaque, so as to balance one another exactly, the painter would need nothing more; his color could be made to correspond with nature's colors. But this is far from being the case. We have an immense number of pigments; tints of every sort, nine-tenths of which should be excluded from the palette of every conscientious worker. If it was Turner who replied "a little yellow and a little red," he at the same time in practice seems to have rather said "any yellow, any red, so it will serve my present turn." The consequence is his pictures have nearly perished in a half century, while the works of the careful old Venetians and Dutchmen are still in fine condition after three hundred years.

Among the pigments prepared by the modern colormen many of the most attractive are utterly untrustworthy. We will say nothing of the brilliant Aniline colors which are so showy and yet will scarcely last a day, but we will select three colors which are in constant use and which it seems almost impossible to get along without. These are Chrome yellow, Carmine red and Prussian blue. Samples of these hung in a strong light will, within a year, completely lose their color, turning green and black.

We have a good supply of yellows of every shade, some of them quite durable; we are pretty well furnished with blues, but good reds are very few. The reds of iron are too dull; the madder preparations are too weak. Vermilion is excellent in its place, but there is absolutely no true red of good body and quite durable.

G. C. L.

ART UNION AGENCIES.

THE following gentlemen have been appointed Honorary Secretaries of the Art Union in their respective cities. They will receive subscriptions to the AMERICAN ART UNION, and will deliver the etchings and journals to subscribers. Specimen copies may be seen at their places of business:

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OUT OF TOWN EXHIBITIONS.

One of the objects of the formation of the American Art Union was that the society should be the medium between the several exhibition associations of the country and the artists, to conduct negotiations that might be mutually advantageous—to furnish such associations meritorious collections of pictures without giving them the trouble of dealing with individual artists, and on the other hand, to obtain for the artists guarantees of sales to an amount proportionate to the number and value of the pictures exhibited. In this respect, the late Southern Exposition, at Louisville, Ky., was pre-eminently successful, and that city can now point to the possession of a collection of fifteen pictures as a nucleus of a public art gallery. This result was brought about through the mediumship of the American Art Union, as detailed in THE ART UNION for January.

Correspondence is requested from friends of art who may wish to hold exhibitions in their several cities during the coming year.

Negotiations are now pending with the San Francisco Art Association for the loan of a collection of Art Union pictures, on a basis of the same nature as that made with the Louisville Exposition Art Committee—which resulted so advantageously to the citizens of Louisville, the artists, and the Art Union.

E. WOOD PERKY, JR., Secretary,
42 East 14th Street, New York City.

Any subscriber of THE ART UNION who changes his post-office address during the Summer months, may have his journal follow him if he will kindly keep us advised of his changes of address. In all cases both the old and the new address should be sent. It must be remembered that THE ART UNION'S business office has been changed to 51 West Tenth Street, where all communications should be addressed henceforth.